

## Overview

A thoracoscopic mass removal is a minimally invasive alternative to traditional thoracic surgery for the removal of growths and tumors of the chest wall, lungs, and heart.

## Why it's done

Your veterinarian may recommend thoracoscopic mass removal if your pet has:

- Evidence of a growth or tumor inside the chest cavity.

## How to prepare for your pet's procedure

Before your pet's procedure, you will meet with one of our specialists to talk about the procedure and what to expect.

When you meet with our team, please bring a list of all medications that your pet is currently taking, including over the counter medications, vitamins, and herbal supplements. Before your pet's procedure, you may be asked to discontinue giving certain medications that can increase the risk of bleeding.

This is a good time to ask questions about the procedure and make sure you understand the risks and benefits.

## Preoperative diagnostics and tests

Before your pet's surgery the following may be indicated:

- Radiographs (x-rays)
- Cardiac and/or thoracic ultrasound
- CT scan
- Fine needle biopsy and cytology of the mass, if accessible
- Comprehensive blood work

## General Instructions for the Day of Surgery

- Please remove your pet's access to food as of midnight the night prior to surgery, but do allow water all night long.
- Please arrive for pet's admission promptly at your scheduled arrival time.
- You will be asked to sign both a Surgical Consent Form as well as an Estimate, indicating your understanding of the procedure, risks, and associated costs.

## What happens during a thoracoscopic mass removal procedure?

Your pet will be given a general anesthetic. Special instruments, including a camera, are passed through small ½ inch incisions into the chest. The mass is visualized, isolated, and removed. A small chest tube may be placed for monitoring after surgery.

## Risks

Complications associated with a thoracoscopic mass removal include the following:

- Adhesions
- Bleeding
- Air leakage from the lungs
- Infection

## After the procedure

- Following the procedure, you will be given a phone call with an update on your pet's recovery.
- Please plan for your pet to remain hospitalized for pain management, supportive care, and monitoring for 1-2 days post operatively.
- You will be given daily updates regarding your pet's progress during their stay.
- A scheduled discharge will be coordinated when your pet is able to go home.
- Once discharged, please remove the bandage from your pet's intravenous catheter site 10 to 15 minutes after arriving home.
- Some chest tenderness is common for 3-5 days following thoracoscopic surgery.

## After the procedure (continued)

- It is important to restrict your pet's activity for the next 3-5 days while the incision is healing. Walks should be short and your pet should always be on a leash. Please do not let your pet rough house with other animals during this time.
- Some patients will vomit or have diarrhea following anesthesia. If the vomiting or diarrhea persists more than 24 hours, please call Salt River. In contrast, some patients may be constipated or may not have a bowel movement for up to 72 hours following anesthesia. If your pet is straining to defecate after 72 hours, please call Salt River.
- Suture removal in 10-14 days is necessary
- Please monitor the incision for any signs of heat, pain, swelling, or discharge. Should you notice any of these signs, it may be an indication of infection. Please call Salt River if you notice a problem.
- Licking or scratching at the incision will dramatically increase the chances of an infection or that the incision will open up. To prevent this from happening, please watch your pet closely for scratching or licking at the incision. If this occurs, an e-collar should be placed.

## Results

The samples are submitted to a number of specialized laboratories for evaluation including the following tests:

- Histopathology
- Bacterial cultures

The final biopsy results can take up to 2 weeks. Once the final results have returned and a treatment plan has been devised, our specialists will call you to discuss the findings and recommendations.

## Follow up

A recheck appointment is required in 2-4 weeks.